Amending budget 3/2008: bluetongue vaccinations; Joint Technology Initiatives; EU Solidarity Fund; establishment plans of European Institute for Gender Equality and European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

2008/2095(BUD) - 29/05/2008

The Committee on Budgets unanimously adopted the joint report by Kyösti **VIRRANKOSKI** (ALDE, FI) and Ville **ITÄLÄ** (EPP-ED, FI), adopting unamended the draft amending budget No 3/2008 of the European Union.

MEPs recalled the main points of this draft budget, which covers the following items:

- the budgeting of the revenue accruing from the Microsoft case (fine and interest totalling EUR 849 200 000),
- the budgeting of savings arising from the smaller than estimated increase for salaries and pensions of officials in 2007,
- reinforcement of the emergency fund for veterinary measures due to the bluetongue crisis by EUR 130 million in commitment appropriations, and EUR 63 950 000 in payment appropriations,
- the creation of budgetary items to accommodate subsidies for four Joint Undertakings (IMI, Clean Sky, ARTEMIS and ENIAC),
- mobilisation of the EU Solidarity Fund for an amount of EUR 98 million in commitment and payment appropriations (relating to forest fires in Greece and floods in Slovenia),
- modifications to the establishment plan of the European Institute for Gender Equality and of the European Economic and Social Committee.

MEPs pointed out that the Council ensured that the so-called Microsoft monitoring mechanism, linked to the Microsoft case, was exclusively financed by the savings in salaries and pensions in Heading 5 of the Financial Perspectives (FP). They also regretted the fact that the Council unexpectedly reduced budget line 26 02 01, thus introducing a new element, **without any discussion with the Parliament,** and hoped to see the use of these savings in Heading 1a of the FP for funding Parliament's priorities.

In addition, MEPs asked the Commission, in future, to avoid including the funding linked to instruments such as the EU Solidarity Fund in draft amending budgets together with other issues, so as to avoid any delay in the decision and delivery of the amounts in question.